Poisoning/Overdose

Overview

- Emergency Medical Care of Poisoning/Overdose
- Relationship to Airway Management
- Medications

Emergency Medical Care of Poisoning/Overdose

- Important questions to consider asking patient

  - What substance

  - When did you ingest/become exposed

  - If an ingestion, how much did you ingest

Questions to Ask Cont…

- Over what time period
- Interventions
- How much do you weigh

Emergency Medicine Care of Poisoning/Overdose

- Ingested
  - Signs and Symptoms
    - History of ingestion
    - Nausea
    - Vomiting
    - Diarrhea

Ingested Cont…

- Signs and Symptoms Cont…
  - Altered mental status
  - Abdominal pain
  - Chemical burns around the mouth
  - Different breath odors

Ingested Cont…

- Emergency Medical Care
  - Remove pills , tablets or fragments with gloves from patient’s mouth, as needed, without injuring oneself
  - Consult medical direction - activated charcoal

Emergency Medical Care Cont…

- Bring all containers, bottles, labels, etc. of poison agents to receiving facility

Inhaled

- Signs and Symptoms
  - History of inhalation of toxic substance
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Chest pain
  - Hoarseness
  - Dizziness

Signs and Symptoms Cont…

- Headache
- Confusion
- Seizures
- Altered mental status

Inhaled Cont…

- Emergency Medical Care
  - Have trained rescuers remove patient from poisonous environment
  - Give oxygen, if not already done in the initial assessment
  - Bring all containers, bottles, labels, etc. of poison agents to hospital

Toxic Injection

- Signs and Symptoms
  - Weakness
  - Dizziness
  - Chills
  - Fever
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting

Toxic Injection Cont..

- Emergency Medical Care
  - Airway and Oxygen
  - Be alert for vomiting
  - Bring all containers, bottles, labels,
    etc. of poison agents to receiving facility

Absorbed

- Signs and Symptoms
  - History of exposure
  - Liquid or powder on patient’s skin
  - Burns
  - Itching
  - Irritation
  - Redness

Absorbed Cont…

- Emergency Medical Care
  - Skin - remove contaminated clothing while protecting oneself from contamination
  - Powder - brush powder off patient, then continue as for other absorbed poisons

Emergency Medical Care Cont..

- Skin

  - Liquid - irrigate with clean water for

    at least 20 minutes (and continue

    en route to facility if possible)

Emergency Medical Care Cont..

- Eye

  - Irrigate with clean water away from

    affected eye for at least 20 minutes

    and continue en route to facility if

    possible

Relationship to Airway Management

Relationship to Airway Management

- Use information and skills learned in airway section of course to manage airway difficulties
- A patient’s condition may deteriorate, so continue to assess patient for airway difficulties and manage as learned previously

Medications

Medications

- Activated charcoal
  - Medication name
    - Generic: Activated Charcoal
    - Trade:
      - SuperChar
      - InstaChar

Medications Cont…

- Trade Name Cont…
  - Actidose
  - LiquiChar
  - Others

Activated Charcoal

- Indications - Poisoning by mouth
- Contraindications
  - Altered mental status
  - Ingestion of acids or alkalis
  - unable to swallow

Activated Charcoal Cont…

- Medications form
  - Pre-mixed in water, frequently available in plastic bottle containing
    12.5 grams
  - Powder - should be avoided in field

Activated Charcoal Cont..

- Dosage

  - Adults and children: 1gram activated charcoal/kg of body weight
  - Usual adult dose: 25 - 50 grams
  - Usual infant/child dose: 12.5 - 25 grams

Activated charcoal Cont.

- Administration
  - Obtain order from medical direction either on-line or off-line
  - Container must be shaken thoroughly
  - Since medication looks like mud, patient may need to be persuaded to drink it

Administration Cont..

- A covered container and a straw may

  improve patient compliance since the patient cannot see the medications this way

Administration Cont…

- If patient takes a long time to drink the medication, the charcoal will settle and will need to be shaken or stirred again

- Record activity and time

Activated Charcoal Cont..

- Actions
  - Binds a certain poisons and prevents them from being absorbed into the body
  - Not all brands of activated charcoal are the same; some bind much more poison than others, so consult medical direction about the brand to use

Activated Charcoal Cont…

- Side Effects

  - Black stools

  - Some patients, particularly those who

    have ingested poisons that cause

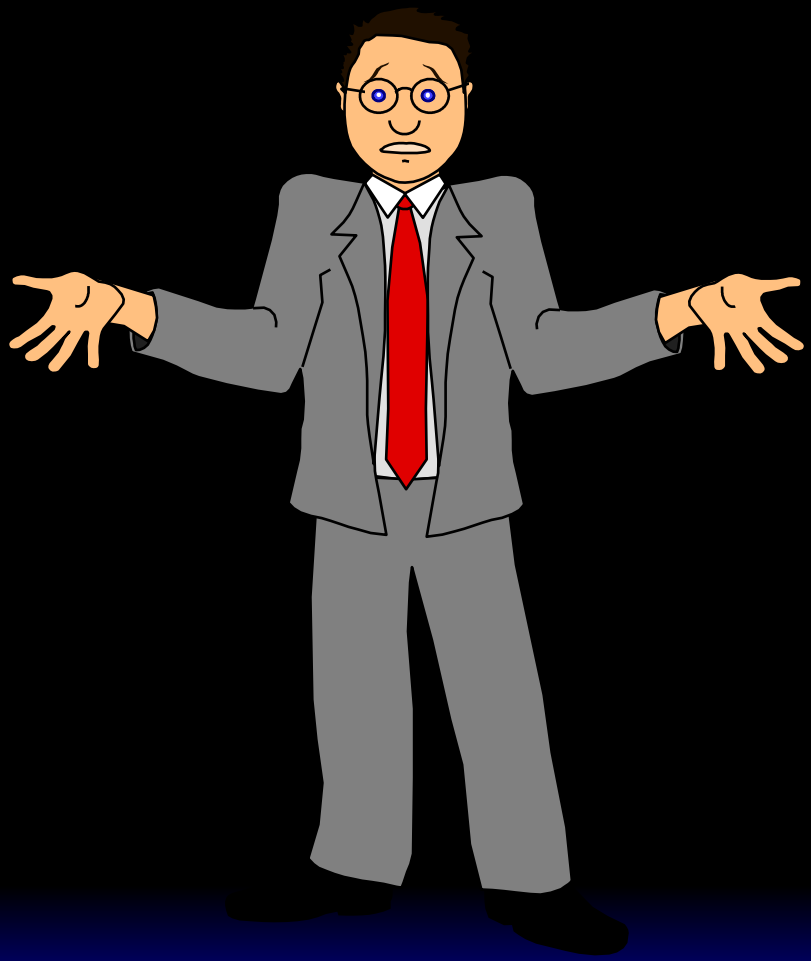
    nausea, may vomit

Activated Charcoal Cont…

- Re-assessment strategies - The EMT-

  Basic should be prepared for the patient to vomit or further deteriorate

Questions



Conclusion

- Summary
  - Emergency Medical Care of Poisoning/ Overdose
  - Relationship to Airway Management
  - Medications